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11/10/74

Un-dear Bureau,

When your letter came yesterday I wondered whether to waste the time responding.

Then I decided perhaps I'd waste the time. Maybe one of you is other than 100% of the representation I have, so an opportunity to influence a single mind might justify time that is probably wasted.

I've been hearing of you for some time, with growing disappointment and dismay. Actually, though, I can't remember hearing your name. Only of commercializing, unprincipled people fastbuckling the trusting minds of the young and misinforming all they can get to pay them for it.

"Assassination Information Bureau," hah?

Reminds me of an incident back in 1936 or 1937 when I was a Senate investigator and editor. We were investigating a native fascist outfit calling itself the "Constitutional Educational League." Like you it was a commercializing of the believing, only from the other side.

The late Senator Elbert Thomas, a scholarly Mormon and a soft-spoken man with the patience one would expect of a man who sired only five daughters, was questioning this character Joe Kamp. About the name of his outfit. After taking Kamp through his understanding of the words in the name of his outfit, Thomas decided that it was neither constitutional nor educational but it might be a league.

You may be a bureau. But what you dish out is not information. And if you really gave a damn about the assassination or their consequences you'd have folded up before you began.

One of your characters, I think Yaxjian, phoned me some time back from Baltimore prior to an appearance at the University of Maryland. He took a long time and foolishly I thought well maybe, just maybe, he really wants to know a little about what he is talking about. So, I tried to let him see that all the stuff he was dishing out generally comes from another source. After a couple of hours he was all "Well Gee! Thanks!"

Then he went to deliver - for what I understand is good pay - his "information" to all these open and trusting young minds. What came back to me is almost word for word the utter falsehood and incompetent fabrication I had heard from him by phone: deliberate misinformation.

So why do you write me and ask me to join your newest, largest exploitation? You know neither me nor my work if you think I'll be part of deceiving people as all of you do. I think that what you do is worse than what you attribute to others and I will not be part of it. I can't condemn the misinforming of anyone strongly enough to take time for the descriptives warranted. And when this deliberate misinforming is of the young I condemn it even more. Whoring is more respectable than what you do.

You have much to say about the speaks, as do others like you. But the reality is that you do their work, making whether or not there is an official connection irrelevant.

I have thus addressed your request for any #suggestions or comments...on our conference. "Drop it and quit before you do more harm, spread more misinformation, bury truth deeper. Your ambiguities about "conspiracy and assassination literature" I address in first-amendment terms: whatever you want is available at normal commercial terms. Normal trade discounts for quantity purchases only with you cash in advance.

Harold Weisberg